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I N T E R E S T E D I N T H E
P R E S E R V A T I O N O F T H E S A I D L E V E L .

By J. W I N G

Agent to the Duke of Bedford

P E T E R B O R O U G H ;
P R I N T E D B Y J . J A C O B , M , D C C , L X X X V I I I .

A REPORT
 OF THE
 STATE OF THE REVENUE
 FOR THE YEAR
 1871-72
 BY
 H. J. JACOB, ESQ.
 SECRETARY TO THE
 BOARD OF REVENUE

CAUSES OF THE DISTRESS OF THAT LEVEL
 AND
 THE LAST TWENTY YEARS



AN INQUIRY INTO THE PROBABLE MEANS OF PREVENTING
 THE RECURRING DISTRESS OF THAT LEVEL
 SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF ENGLAND
 IN 1871
 PRESERVATION OF THE SAID LEVEL

PRINTED BY J. JACOB, M.D.C.C.LXXV.



A N

ENQUIRY INTO THE STATE

O F T H E

N O R T H L E V E L. &c.

THE Time approaching, when the Situation of the Revenues of the North Level will demand the serious Attention of every Proprietor therein. — An Agent for one of the Principle Estates in the Level, publicly contending against a Taxation, and a Plan of some Kind, it should seem, in Agitation for, an Increase of those Revenues; and as it must be a Matter of great Importance to the several Individuals whose Property is situate in the Level; his well Meaning cannot be doubted, who endeavours to pursue such Inquiries, and state such Facts, as may afford all Parties interested, Information; in Hopes thereby, they may be enabled to judge, and decide for themselves, on a Question so intimately connected with their Interests, and on which too, the Prosperity and Happiness, or Distress and Ruin of Numbers of Individuals, may eventually depend.

THIS

THIS LEVEL Parcel of the Great Level of the Fens, called Bedford Level, containing about 40,000 Acres of Land (of which about 11,600 Acres, are Part of the 95,000 allotted to William Earl of Bedford and his Participants, for Maintenance and Preservation of the said Great Level, and commonly called Adventure Land) was by the North Level Act, passed in the 27th Year of the Reign of his late Majesty, separated from the other Levels (the Middle and South) with respect to their Revenues, the several Accounts between the Levels themselves, and between the Levels and the Creditors of the Corporation being previously settled, when there was due to the Duke of Bedford, and Earl of Lincoln, as Principal Proprietors of the North Level, on Account of that Level, the Sum of 18,900l. and upwards, viz. to the Duke of Bedford five-sixths or 15,750l. the Remaining one-sixth 3,150l. to the Earl of Lincoln, then Proprietor of the Estate now belonging to Sir Sampson Gideon Bart. and a Part of the 11,600l. Acres of Adventure Land in the North Level, and the further Sum of 1,800l. was by the said Act ascertained and declared to be the Proportion of the said North Level, of and in the other Debts of the Corporation of Bedford Level, contracted before the Year 1728; the Duke of Bedford most generously remitted the whole of his Debt, and the Security was cancelled, the Earl of Lincoln as generously concurred with him in this Measure, and by the North Level Act, this Transaction received the Sanction of Parliament; and in order to raise Money to discharge the said further Sum of 1,800l. it was amongst other Things enacted, that it should and might be lawful to and for the Proprietors of taxable Lands, within the said North Level, to purchase off so much of the Taxes charged on their respective Lands by Virtue of or under the Acts of the 15th and 20th Years of the Reign of King Charles the Second, as should be sufficient to raise the said Sum of 1,800l. which was done accordingly, and the Debt discharged. And the Taxes chargeable by Virtue of the said Acts of 15th and 20th Charles II. upon the Residue of the taxable Lands within the North Level, which were not so exonerated were fixed and settled at a Tax and a Quarter, raising the annual Sum of 717l. 3s. 4½. for the Maintenance and Preservation of the said North Level, and the several Banks, Rivers, and Works necessary for the same; but Experience having shewn the Insufficiency thereof, for those Purposes, the North Level Act declaring that "Notwithstanding the greatest Part of the Revenues of the said North Level have ever since the said Year 1728, been laid out in and about the same, the several
"Banks,

“Banks, Rivers, Sewers, and Works of the same Level, are become so
 “greatly decayed and ruinous, that great Part of the Lands in the
 “same Level have lately been very frequently flooded, and unless
 “some immediate Remedy be applied will become entirely drowned
 “and, of little or no Value” the Proprietors of the Free Lands in
 the said Level, with divers Lands adjoining thereto, in the Manor of
 Crowland, wisely united, being sensible that their Interests were mu-
 tual, with the Adventure Lands against their Common Enemy, and did
 not as is too often the Case, fall to quarrelling about the Means
 of opposing it; this Unanimity produced the North Level Act, which
 is said to contain the most complete System of that Kind of Policy,
 on which the modern Acts for Draining are founded, of any that hath
 yet received the Sanction of the Legislature; — By this Act the Lands
 and Grounds in the said North Level, and the Lands called Portland
 otherwise Great Portland, lying within the Manor of Crowland in
 South Holland in the County of Lincoln, intended to be drained,
 were divided into Five Districts or Divisions; Commissioners for the
 said several Districts were appointed, an annual Succession provided,
 and directed to meet on the First Monday in July in every Year;
 the Quantity of Land to be taxed in the said five Districts being ascer-
 tained, the said Commissioners were empowered to assess and charge
 the same, as well the Adventure as Free Lands, and the Lands adjoining
 thereto, in the Manor of Crowland (except as therein excepted)
 amounting in all to about 40,000 Acres, with equal and proportiona-
 ble yearly Rates and Taxes, so that the said Rates and Taxes for the
 first four Years, should be after the yearly Rate of One Shilling for every
 Acre of the said Lands and Grounds, and so that after the Expiration
 of the said Term of four Years, the said Rates and Taxes should not
 exceed in any one Year, Six-pence for every Acre of the said Lands
 and Grounds, raising an annual Sum of 990*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.*

And the said Act directs the several Works to which the said Reve-
 nues are to be applied, separate and distinct from each other, the one
 under the immediate Direction of the North Level Commissioners, the
 other under the Direction of the Officer to the Corporation of Bed-
 ford Level, whose Account of the Money expended by him was never-
 theless subject to their Examination, &c. but as the Monies which by
 the said North Level Act, were to be yearly rated and levied, were not
 at first sufficient for answering the Charge and Expence of the said Ge-
 neral Works, and defraying the Expences in and about passing that

Act, the Commissioners thereby appointed, were empowered to borrow 14,000l. on the Credit of those Rates and Taxes.

And by the Act of the 29th, Year of GEO. II. the Corporation were empowered to borrow for the use of the North Level 5,000l. on the Credit of the Taxes chargeable on the Adventure Land, in the said North Level, by Virtue of or under the Acts of 15th, and 20th, Charles II.

But ample and liberal as these Establishments of 717l. 3s. 4½ per Annum for the Great Outring Banks of the Level, and 990l. 11s. 2d. for the General Works, under the Care of the North Level Commissioners might seem, fatal Experience too soon shewed, their Insufficiency to answer their well intended Purposes; the Year 1763 being the Commencement, though in a small Degree, of those Misfortunes which afterwards were so largely and ruinously extended, from the Year 1763 to the Year 1770 there were Seven large Breaches in the North Bank, and a great Number of small ones, the Breach which happened near Peterborough in the Year 1770, was 120 Feet wide and 36 Feet deep; the North Level (except a very small Proportion of High Land) was thereby entirely drowned, and the Bank was washed quite through, and the Officers were obliged to be at a considerable Expence to repair it, to prevent its being washed entirely away; the Breaches which happened in the North Bank in the Year 1763 and 1764, obliged the Corporation, to enable them to Repair the same, to borrow the whole of the 5000l. which they were, by Act 29, GEO. II. empowered to do, the Annual Interest of which, being 225l. (since raised to 250l.) reduced the yearly Fund arising to the Corporation from the said Tax and a Quarter upon the taxable Lands within the said Level to 492l. 3s. 4½ and other Breaches happening in the North Bank of Moreton's Leame in the Year 1767; the said 5000l. was expended, and other Debts contracted by the Corporation in the necessary Repairs of the said North Bank, and other Works belonging to them in the said North Level.

And further Breaches happening in the Year 1770, the Tax and a Quarter on the Adventure Lands being subject to the Debt of 5000l. and the other Rents and Revenues payable to the Corporation from and out of the North Level greatly insufficient to repair the said Bank, to discharge the other Debts then incurred, and to maintain and support

support the other Works, absolutely necessary to the preserving and well draining of the Lands lying in the said North Level and the said Manor of Crowland; in the Year 1771 and in the 11th, Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, Application was made to Parliament, and a Tax was laid, upon all the Lands in the said North Level of Six-pence per Acre per Annum, and the Lands called Portsand otherwise Great Portsand, were charged with a Tax of Three-pence for every Acre thereof; and it was by the said Act enacted that the Quantities of the Lands and Grounds to be so rated charged and assessed, should be taken according to the respective Quantities thereof, ascertained in Pursuance of the said Act of the 27th, GEO. II. as follows

Viz.	A.	R.	P.	
1st District	4,489	1	14	
2d District	3,643	3	22	
3d District	17,588	0	9	being the whole of Thorney Lordship.
4th District	6,449	3	3	
5th District	7,451	1	28	Portsand taxed at 3d. per Acre.
Total	39,622	1	36	

And the Monies arising from such Tax, together with the Tax and a Quarter upon the Adventure Lands, (but subject and without Prejudice to the Payment of the Debt of 5000l.) were directed to be applied, after paying and defraying the Charges of the Act, in the first Place, "to pay and discharge such Debts as have been incurred for repairing the said North Bank of Moreton's Leame, and other Works directed by the said Act of the 27th, GEO. II. and for ever after, to raise, make good and keep in Repair the said North Bank of Moreton's Leame" &c. &c. &c." and though called the Corporation Revenue, the said Act of the 11th Year of his present Majesty directs, that a Committee of the North Level Commissioners, to be chosen by the said Commissioners at their yearly General Meeting, shall superintend, and direct such Works to be done, in Pursuance of the said Act, as they shall see necessary, and that the Charges and Expences of such Works, shall be paid out of such Revenue, so that, by this Act, this Fund, as well as that, arising from the 6d. per Acre Tax laid per Act 27th, GEO. II. for the General Works belonging the North Level Commissioners, comes under the Management, Direction, and Expenditure, of the said Commissioners.

The

The said Act of the 11th, of GEO. III. also empowers the Proprietors of taxable Lands, to purchase off the Taxes laid by Virtue thereof, on their respective Lands, after the Rate of Thirty Years Purchase; but it is to be observed, none of the Taxes were, or have as yet been purchased off.

And a Power was also by the said Act given to the Corporation of Bedford Level, with the Consent of the Owners of Thorney, High and Low Borough Fen, and the Manor of Crowland to borrow on Bond, or raise by Sale of the Taxes aforesaid, a Sum not exceeding Twenty Thousand Pounds; and the former Revenue of the North Level (subject to the former Debt) with the present Tax, were made a Security for the Money so borrowed. The Great Expence occasioned by the frequent Breaches in the North Bank, made it necessary to borrow the whole of the said Sum of 20,000l.

In the Year 1775 the Situation of the Commissioners Works and Revenues, made an Application to Parliament for a further Tax necessary, and an Act was in Consequence obtained; which charged the Lands in the North Level, with a Tax of Two Shillings, and the Lands in Portland with One Shilling an Acre, for the Term of Three Years, to be applied in Support of those Works, and in Discharge of the Debts contracted on account thereof, to which the Taxes of One Shilling for Four Years, and Six-pence an Acre afterwards, were directed by the Act of 27th, GEO. II. to be applied, and in Support of, and in Discharge of the Debts, contracted on Account of Kinderly's Cut, and other Works directed by the Tid St. Giles and Newton Act of Parliament.

The said Act also declaring, "that the Banks of Moreton's Leame
"Carr Dyke and the Folly, having by the frequent Floods been much
"endamaged, and notwithstanding great Sums have been expended
"thereon, are still liable to Breaches, in cases of Great Land Floods,
"and the said Funds provided for the Repairs thereof are greatly in
"Debt, &c." empowered the Commissioners with the Consent of the Owners of Thorney, Sir Sampson Gideon, and Mr. Hunter, to lay a further Tax not exceeding One Shilling an Acre on the Lands in the North Level, and Six-pence on those in Portland for One Year, to be applied in the Repairs of those Banks, and on the 1st, of July 1776, with the Consent of the Parties before mentioned, a Tax of one Shilling

ling and Six-pence, was assessed and laid accordingly.

But notwithstanding there had been expended on the North Bank of Moreton's Leame, since the Year 1763, but the greatest Part since the Year 1770, upwards of 30,000l. — And the Sum of 10,768l. 16s. 10d. (being the Amount of the Three Years Tax) in Addition to the Commissioners Fund, and Monies borrowed and advanced, being together 20,000l. and upwards, had been expended on Account of the General Works belonging to the Commissioners of the North Level and Portland, since, and during the Year 1773.

The North Level Committee at a Meeting held at the Duke's Head Inn in Thorney, on Monday the 31st Day of August, 1778 —

Report

"That upon Examining the State of the Revenue Debt and Works
"of the General Commissioners of the North Level and Portland

"We do find

"REVENUE.

"The only Tax on the Lands in the North Level and Portland, to
"maintain and support the General Works thereof, is that laid by the
"Act 27, of GEO. II. amounting to per Annum- - - £990 11 2

"DEBT.

"By the Powers given in the above recited Act, the
"said Commissioners have borrowed on the Credit of the
"above Taxes 14,000l. the annual Interest of which is -- 664 10 0

"Remains per Annum- - - £326 1 2
"for Repairing and Maintaining the following Works of the North
"Level and Portland, and to pay Officers Salaries, &c.

"Viz.

"DRAINS.

"Kinderly's Cut at the Sea, the Reservoir, Shire Drain, and the
"several Rivers and Drains within the said Level, containing in
"Length near 48 Miles.

"BANKS.

"The Great Dam across Wisbeach Channel—The Bank on the
 "East Side Kinderly's Cut, both Banks of the Reservoir and Shire
 "Drain, and the Banks of the Five several Districts of the North Level
 "and Portland, containing in Length upwards of 72 Miles.

"SLUICES.

"Gunthorpe Sluice at the Sea, — Hill's Sluice, — Clows Cross
 "Sluice, and three Pair of Flood-gates within the North Level.

"BRIDGES.

"Nine Cart Bridges over several Public Drains.

"SALARIES.

"About 120l. per Annum.

"This Committee taking the above State into Consideration, are
 "of Opinion, that the annual Sum of 326l. 1s. 2d. remaining after the
 "Interest of the above Debt is paid, to pay Officers Salaries, support
 "and maintain the several Works necessary for the Draining and Pre-
 "serving the said Level and Portland, is very insufficient for that Pur-
 "pose, and that without some further Provision the said Works will
 "soon go to Decay, and cannot be reinstated without large Sums of
 "Money, and the Country be in great Danger of being Drowned in
 "Wet Seasons. It is therefore the Opinion of the said Committee,
 "That it will be greatly for the Interest of the Proprietors of Lands in
 "the North Level and Portland, to lay such a Tax for a certain Number
 "of Years, as will not only keep the said Works in good Repair, but
 "at the same Time reduce the Debt, so as at the Expiration thereof,
 "the present 6d. an Acre may remain to be applied in Support of the
 "General Works, only for the Future;" Such was the Opinion of the
 North Level Committee at that Time, and after so large a Sum of
 Money had been expended, of the Fund necessary to maintain and
 support those very extensive, but absolutely necessary Works, for
 Draining and Preserving the North Level, and which must be esteem-
 ed but small, in Comparison with their Magnitude.

And on examining the State of the Revenue Debt and Works
 of the Corporation of Bedford Level, for the North Level, the Reve-
 nues were found so very insufficient, That at a General Meeting
 of

of the Commissioners and Land Owners of the North Level, &c. on Monday Nov. 30, 1778, It was Resolved "That Applicatoin be "made to Parliament, for Leave to lay a Tax of 4d. per Acre on the "Lands in the North Level, and 2d. per Acre on the Lands in Portland, "for the Term of Nine Years, to commence from Christmas 1779, "to be applied to the Support of the North Bank of Moreton's "Leame, Carr Dyke, and the Folly Banks, along with the present "Revenues of the Corporation of Bedford Level, for the North Level, "And that such Application be made at the same Time, that Ap- "plication is made for laying 12d. per Acre on the North Le- "vel, and 6d. per Acre on Portland, for the same Term of Nine "Years, for maintaining and supporting the General Works of the "Commissioners of the North Level, and for Payment of the Debt "contracted under the Act of the 27th of King George the Second."

Application to Parliament was accordingly made, an Act obtained, and the Lands taxed agreeable to these Resolutions, from Christmas 1779, for the Term of Nine Years, viz. until Christmas 1788, when these Taxes cease, the Debt of 14,000l. will be discharged, and the 6d. per Acre Tax per Act 27, GEO. II will remain, to be applied in Support of the Commissioners General Works only for the Future.

But the Corporation Revenues for the North Bank, &c. will be the same at Christmas 1788, as they were before the passing of that Act, or in the Language of the said Act "will be subject in the first Place "to the Interest of the Debt of 25,000l. incurred thereon, and to "the Payment of a yearly Sum of 41l. to the Trustees for the Wel- "land Bank and Road, the Surplus thereof, after Payment of such "Interest and yearly Sum, and of the further yearly Sum of Seventy- "seven Pounds (the Amount of the Salaries of the several Officers of "the said Corporation for the said North Level) amounts only to 346l. "11s. 10d. per Annum, or thereabouts, which is insufficient for "supporting and maintaining the several Works to which the same is "applicable, and without further Aids for supporting and maintaining "the said several Banks and Works, for preserving the said North "Level, the said Banks will soon be in Danger of breaking, whereby "the said Lands would be Drowned, to the inestimable Loss of the "several Owners and Proprietors thereof, and to the Prejudice of "the Public". A Situation demanding the Attention of every Pro- prietor, and Person interested in the Preservation of the said Level, and

and their Exertions in preventing those Evils, that inevitably must ensue the Neglect thereof.

But added to the numerous Taxes herein beforementioned, it is to be observed, most of the Districts in the said North Level, have been charged with very heavy Taxes for the Support of their inside Works for Draining; besides the annual Tax of 1s. per Acre for such Purposes, the Fourth District hath been charged with a Further Tax of 1s. per Acre for Twelve Years, and the Second District with 2s. 6d. per Acre for Fourteen Years, by Virtue of an Act passed in the Year 1773, which as the said Act declares, became necessary, "by Reason of the Wetness of the Seasons, and the many Breaches in the North Bank of Moreton's Leame, being the great Barrier Bank of the said North Level, against the Waters of Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire" these Taxes have also ceased, the Term for which they were laid being expired, and the Debts of the Districts discharged, so that the only remaining Debt after Christmas 1788, throughout the whole of the North Level, either on the Credit of the District, or Public Taxes, will be the 25,000l. on the Corporation Revenues, which reduces them to the very insufficient Sum before mentioned, for the Support of those Works, to the former Failure of which so many dreadful Consequences are to be attributed. To guard against a future one, as much as may be, even at ever so remote a Period, it is hoped will be the Care of every Proprietor in the Level.

And it is earnestly hoped that an Effectual Plan, only will be adopted, and that every Person will consider well, before they accede to one, which under the specious Appearance of Oeconomy, may be the means of, if it hath not for its Object, *the neglecting the North Bank of Moreton's Leame, on which the WHOLE LEVEL depends; deserting the interior Works, recommending a Reliance on an Outfal,* which however promising, is undoubtedly in a much worse State, than it was some (few) Years ago, from a Circumstance meriting the most serious Consideration, the want of Freshes and Back Water to keep it open; this is a Fact, incontrovertible, and sufficient to create, a most alarming Degree of Mistrust and Suspicion, respecting the real Situation of the Country, and a Doubt if the Seasons rather than an apparent State of Security, have not been so propitious thereto of late; It may and doubtless will be urged, that the Freshes will again Restore the Outfal, but what may not the intermediate Consequence be? may not

not those Freshes, if the Outfal is filted up, and the Bank reduced from Neglect, break it? and renew those Scenes of Misery, Distress, and Devastation still recent in, and never to be eradicated from, the Minds of those who were Witnesses to, and Sufferers thereby, when Individuals lost Thousands, the Loss to the Community cannot be Estimated. But this Digression it is hoped will be pardoned — and to return to the Inquiry.

From hence it appears, and every Act of Parliament that has been obtained, either for the Public or District Works, justifies the Inference — that to Two Causes, may the Distresses of the Level, during the last 25 Years be confined, viz. to the Breaches in the North Bank, and to the Debts owing on the Revenues of the Level, every Breach of Bank, producing Increase of Debt, and every Debt, a Diminution of the Fund for its Support — To repair the one, and make up for the Deficiencies in the other, have been the Grounds for all the numerous Taxes, herein before recited, since the Year 1771. — To give Security (as much as possible) to the North Bank, and to all the other Works, on which the Level depends, and to get rid of the Debt, now that the Country is in a Situation to do it, seem to be the only Means of preventing, a Renewal of those Distresses; and the Period is now arrived, when a Consideration, how best to accomplish those Ends, becomes essentially necessary, and becomes too the Duty of every Individual interested in, or connected with the Level, seriously and impartially to consider, seeing that a Neglect or Failure, of so doing, may produce Consequences, which would not be confined to themselves, or to the present Times.

Compare the Situation now, of several Proprietors in the North Level, with that of the former Owners of the same Estates, who were obliged either to abandon, or dispose of them, to be freed from the Arrears of Taxes, equal in several Instances, to the Value of the Estates, having been for Years unoccupied after the General Drowning of the Level; and such a Change (though but a small Part of the Ruinous and Dreadful Effects) would again take Place from a similar Event. To these Proprietors, no Argument need be used, to convince them of, nor from them can any Exertion be wanting, to endeavour to preserve, their present happy State.

And if the Idea of a temporary Taxation was ever adviseable, it
D seems

seems to be particularly so in the present Instance; At Christmas 1788 the increased Fund provided by the Act 19, GEO. III. ceases, and as has been before mentioned 346l. 11s. 10d. will then be the remaining annual Income for the Support of the North Bank of Moreton's Leame, Carr Dyke, and the Folly Banks—The only Period since the Year 1754, when there was a certain annual Sum for the Support of those Works, was from that Time to 1763, being 717l. 3s. 6d. which was found to be inadequate, the Bank breaking in 1763; But it is said, the improved State of the Outfall, makes a large and strong Bank, now, the less necessary: previous to the Year 1763, neither of the Banks had broke for many Years; what then may be supposed to have been the State of the Outfall during the greatest Part of that Time? It is now good, but not improving; it was lost, before which, it had been better than it now is; it is too fluctuating, to place the *whole* Dependance on, was it ever so capable of performing the *whole* Office, but it is not; and it will benefit the Level but little, however good it may be, if the Waters, which are by far too much, both within, and without, are obstructed in their Passage to it.

But a temporary Taxation is objected to by Mr. Maxwell in a Publication, which it is not intended here minutely to consider, but being addressed to the Proprietors in general, every Proprietor has a Right to reply to, and to consider as he thinks proper, without being supposed to intend any personal Insult towards him;—And the purchasing off the Taxes or a Part, is proposed by him, in the stead thereof, as the Means of increasing what he admits may be insufficient, the Fund for the Support of the Corporation Works in the North Level; However adequate his Plan may be to the intended Purpose, the Execution of it, must depend entirely on the Duke of Bedford, to which Mr. Maxwell endeavours to allure His Grace, by what appears to him, the most powerful of all Arguments, SELF INTEREST, making a Statement of the Difference, evidently erroneous; But was it otherwise, and as Mr. Maxwell states it, the Country have no Reason to think that HIS GRACE *would* Sacrifice their's, to his own Interest—And it may not be improper here to remark a Misrepresentation of Mr. Maxwell's of a Transaction, noticed at the beginning of this Pamphlet, knowing which, and neglecting, would be participating in the Impropriety and Ingratitude of the Misrepresentation, and of which, no one who has read the North Level Act, with the least Degree of Attention, can possibly be ignorant.

In

In speaking of the Fund for the Commissioners Works, Mr. Maxwell says "No Tax has been laid for this Purpose previous to the 27, GEO. II. for till that Time the Outfal had been supported by Contribution of the Owners of the Estates now belonging to the Duke of Bedford and Sir Sampson Gideon, as appears by Recitals in the Act;" And in a Note to explain, Mr. Maxwell says "By the Word Contribution it must not be understood, that the Money was actually given for that Purpose, by these two Proprietors, it was in Fact only advanced to the Corporation by way of Loan, and at the Disengagement of the North Level from the other two Levels, it was accounted for as such, in the Adjustment of Debts which then took Place;" such is Mr. Maxwell's Representation; but what is the Fact?

The Money to the Amount of 18,000*l.* and upwards *was actually given* by those two Proprietors, notwithstanding the Debt arose on a most solemn Contract, and was attended with all the Circumstances of Equity and Justice that accompanies the fairest Transactions, the Sum of 15,750*l.* was his Graces, and 3,150*l.* the Earl of Lincoln's Share thereof, who generously concurred with his Grace, in remitting the Debt, the Securities were cancelled, and the North Level Act confirmed the Transaction; and whilst we admire the noble Benefaction — What must we think of such a Misrepresentation of it?

A Principle of Duty to his Employer led Mr. Maxwell to consider the Subject; and led him to consider how a temporary Tax would affect his Interest as follows

He supposes 4,000*l.* of his Debt to be paid off.

The new Tax would take from him 223*l.* per Annum, which with the Interest thereof for 13 Years is - - - - - £ 3,947 -- --
or rather more than 17½ Years Purchase.

The Interest of 4,000*l.* Part of Sir Sampson Gideon's Debt, at 5*l.* per Cent. is - - - - - £ 200 -- --

The Outgoings of his Estate will be lessened by Purchase of the Tax - - - - - 111 10 --

The lessening Sir Sampson Gideon's Income will be 88 10 --
which at 30 Years Purchase is - - - - - 2,655 -- --

Sir Sampson Gideon will gain by purchasing the Tax of 6d.
per Acre instead of charging his Estate with the new Tax £ 1,292 -- --
This is Mr. Maxwell's Calculation.

But

But the real Value of an annual Payment for 13 Years, we are told, is not worth more than 9 Years and 5 Months Purchase, so that instead of 3947l. as above, Sir Sampson Gideon's Charge for the New Tax should be only - - - - - £ 2100 -- --
 His Loss as above - - - - - 2655 -- --

So that Sir Sampson would be Gainer by the New Tax £ 555 -- --
 instead of losing 1292l. as Mr. Maxwell says.

But supposing the Amount of the New Tax for 13 Years at 223l. per Annum equal to - - - - - £ 2899 -- --
 which is the most that it can possibly be called.
 The lessening of the Income as before stated - - - - - 2655 -- --

Making the Difference to be - - - - - £ 244 -- --
 to Sir Sampson Gideon, by introducing the new Tax, instead of his purchasing off the old; and if this is *all the Objection*, Mr. Maxwell on the Part of Sir Sampson Gideon hath to the New Tax, should it be recommended, doubtless it may easily be removed.

To consider Mr. Maxwell's Plan with respect to the Corporation Fund and Works.

He proposes that His Grace and Sir Sampson Gideon shall purchase off their 6d. per Acre Taxes, amounting to 550l. per Annum, by which Means the Fund for the Support of the Banks will be increased to 700l. per Annum, (he says 800l. but he does not deduct the Payments for the Welland Bank, and Officers Salaries,) to this slender Sum would the Country be reduced, to support those Works, on which its Existence depends; deprived of the Aid of the Duke of Bedford's Contribution, which he has always readily advanced on the least Emergency; and it is still in the Recollection of many People, that the Bank has received in one Winter, as much Damage, though no Breach, as would require the whole Fund to Repair—but in Case of a Breach, for 700l. per Annum would not keep it, in such a progressive State of Improvement, as to put it out of Danger, this small Fund must then be still further reduced, to borrow Money upon, to repair it; and suppose too, what is both possible, and not improbable; that any of the other Creditors, who in the Times of Distress, advanced their Money, for the Assistance of the Country, should now require it; for it must occasion a serious Alarm, to discover a want of Inclination
 to

to provide for them, now that the Country is in a Situation so capable of doing it, — and should it so happen, that in Case of Non-payment of their Demand, they should, what they are empowered by the Act to do, take Possession of the Revenues, until their Debts are discharged; what in such Case would the Works be reduced to? for they must be very ignorant thereof indeed, who can suppose they would not soon, very soon go to Decay, without constant Care and Attention, and great Expence.

A Comparison is made betwixt the North and South Banks, and their Funds, but why make it? God forbid there should ever be a Jealousy betwixt the two Levels; the North Level has always been forward to promote those Ends, calculated for their mutual Benefits, and has suffered too much from repeated Drownings, to wish their Neighbours in a similar State.

Surely then such a Country as the North Level at present is, demands the Care of every Person interested therein, to put it out of the Reach of Danger and Ruin as much as possible, from either Creditors, Seasons, or the Uncertainty of the Winds and Tides. — And should it be at the Expence of a temporary Taxation as Mr. Maxwell alludes to, what is a 13 Years Tax of 1s. per Acre to attain such Purposes? He objects to its not providing a sufficient Fund for the first Years, take another Year, or two, if necessary, it cannot be an Object.

But it is not intended here to propose any Plan in particular, and the Consideration of Mr. Maxwell's, has occasioned the foregoing Remarks. — Something is undoubtedly necessary to be done, but what, must be determined, not by a private Individual. — To his Grace the Duke of Bedford, the Country must, and do look up for Support, and Protection, and whatever Plan, even if it should be that of a temporary Taxation, His Grace shall think proper to adopt, which may tend to place the Works and Revenues of the North Level, on a liberal and permanent Establishment, to that the Country will no doubt cheerfully accede, as being the only one likely to secure to them their Property and their Happiness.

Before quitting the Subject, Let us consider a little further the Nature of Mr. Maxwell's Publication, the Charges therein contained, and

the Censures and Reflections obliquely cast by him, not indeed on the Proprietors, for those he openly charges at first, with Ignorance, at last, with Poverty, but his Plans, are, to enlighten, and to enrich them.

The wicked Proposer of the Plan whoever he may be, is charged with an Attempt, to introduce one, either founded in Error, or having for its Purpose something widely differing from what its Title implies, and his Grace, and Sir Sampson Gideon with *Folly*, if they accede thereto!!

At the Expiration of the Time for which the Tax is said to be intended—Mr. Maxwell is at a Loss, how to dispose of the annual Sum of 1,714l. 11s. 10d. — In a reply, by a Proprietor, to Mr. Maxwell's Publication—a very desirable Mode, is pointed out of disposing of the Money, should the Country ever arrive at the fortunate Period of possessing it.

The Statements, he has made of the Commissioners Works, must proceed from his want of Knowledge of them, otherwise he would not have attempted to persuade either himself or other People, that nothing but the Works of the Outfall were necessary, to drain and preserve the North Level.

Suppose for a Moment, but in Idea only, that any Person in the North Level was capable of a wish, to embezzle the Public's Money; the System on which the Business is conducted, would effectually prevent it. — The Corporation Taxes, from the Collector, pass to the Receiver General, from him to the Officer, whose Accounts are annually examined by the North Level Committee, many of whom are Proprietors, who have always been permitted (what indeed they have a Right to) to examine into the Expenditure of the Funds to which they contribute; The Commissioners are conducted in a Manner similar thereto, with great Accuracy, and Correctness, and equally strict Scrutiny.—No public Business was ever conducted more openly, fairly, and hitherto to the most perfect Satisfaction of those Proprietors who have attended to it; which many have made a Point of doing, and to whose Advice and Attention, the Country in General are much indebted, and in the Execution of the Business have put the Country, to as little Expence as possible; The Officers for the
several

several Districts, are most of them Men of Property and interested greatly in their Preservation—The Collectors of the Taxes who are appointed in strict Conformity to the several Acts, are paid a Poundage only for what they collect, so that their own Interest, will make them do their Duty to their utmost—Nor is there an Individual at present concerned for the public Works of the Level, who cannot, dare not say to *him*, reflecting on his Integrity

"You have done that you should be sorry for."

"There is no terror Cassius, in your threats;

"For I am arm'd so much in Honesty,

"That they pass by me, as the idle Wind,

"Which I respect not."

I have now to request the Indulgence, and to beg the Pardon of the Public, for the Liberty I have taken in intruding upon them, this Publication; sensible of the Presumption, and of my own Inability, I engaged in it, with the utmost Reluctance, but very strong Reasons, prevailed over my Disinclination; I entreat it may not be supposed that I am acting with the Duke of Bedford's Concurrence, His Grace, is I believe at present, totally unacquainted with the Subject, it will come before him, and *HIS GRACE will decide thereon*; Situate as I am, in the Midst of those, who would be Sufferers by the Failure of the Works, which preserve the Level; I must feel for the Distresses, such Failures would occasion; and should any of my Neighbours differ from me in Sentiment, and think me in an Error, I trust they will have the Goodness to look upon it, as proceeding only, from too great an Anxiety, to preserve the Country; and with Respect to any advantage it may be said, I propose to myself, from the receiving a new Tax, I shall only observe, that having the Honour to be a Member of the Bedford Level Corporation, I can hold no Place of Profit under them.

September 17th, 1788.

J. WING.

favoured Districts, are well of them. Men of Property and Interest
greatly in their preservation—the Collectors of the Taxes who are
appointed in their Consequence to the several Aids, are paid a Pound.
and only for what they collect, to that their own Interest will make
them do their Duty to their utmost—Nor is there an Individual
at present concerned for the public Works of the Level, who
cannot date his day to him, reflecting on his Integrity.

"You have seen that you should be sorry for."
"There is no error coming in your throat."
"For I am afraid to much in honesty."
"That they pass by me, as the idle Wind."

E R R A T A.

Page 3, for ENQUIRY read INQUIRY.

Page 3 line 4, for Principle read Principal.

Page 12 line 3, for numerous read numerous.



I have now a great many of the Public for the Level, and I am
lication; I shall only oblige, that having the Honour to be a Member of
of the Bedford Level Corporation, I can hold no Place of Profit
under them.
I have now a great many of the Public for the Level, and I am
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